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8 December 1958

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

8 December 1958

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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USSR: Khrushchev strongly disparaged the Chinese Communist communes in his recent conversation with Senator Humphrey, describing them as simply a means of applying massive amounts of labor in agriculture. Stating that the USSR unsuccessfully experimented with a "similar" organization in its early days, he added that the Soviet regime had since shifted to methods which recognized the importance of incentives. In discussing internal political affairs, Khrushchev said that he intended to reduce the role of the secret police further. He also admitted that, before the meeting of the central committee in June 1957--which gave him his victory over the "antiparty group"--there had been a majority of seven to four against him in the party presidium.

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(b) He also bragged that the USSR now has a 7,500-nautical-mile rocket and a five-megaton bomb using only one tenth the fissionable material formerly required.

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Greece: The arrest on 5 December of a leader of the Communist-front United Democratic Left (EDA) may signal an all-out offensive by the Greek Government against the major opposition party in the Chamber of Deputies. The simultaneous announcement that 13 members of a clandestine Communist organization had been arrested [redacted]

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[redacted] indicates that the Karamanlis government is trying to divert public attention from its recent failure to win UN backing on the Cyprus issue. Arrests of other EDA leaders and the closing of the party newspaper Avgi are probable. [redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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III. THE WEST

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The Netherlands: The coalition government of Willem Drees has been under heavy pressure recently, primarily because Drees' own Labor party is increasingly perturbed over apparent losses of electoral support. Foreign Minister Luns believes the cabinet may resign this week as a result of disagreement about changes in tax laws.

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Khrushchev Disapproves of Chinese Communes

Khrushchev strongly disparaged the Chinese Communist communes in his conversation with Senator Humphrey on 1 December, and commented that they were only a means of using massive amounts of labor in agriculture. In the first comment on the new Chinese development by a top Soviet leader, he said that communes had been tried in the Soviet Union but they did not work because it was found that incentives were necessary. He added, however, that the Chinese were doing extremely well and he anticipated no difficulty with them.

Khrushchev, apparently referring to the use of the secret police for domestic political purposes, stated that he had already reduced its role from what it was under Stalin and that he intended to reduce it still further. The only example offered, however, was that he was going to substitute ordinary police for the secret police as Kremlin guards.

He also confirmed previous reports that he had been in the minority in the party presidium in June 1957 when Malenkov, Molotov, et al, sought his ouster. He admitted that the vote had been seven to four against him and that he had won only by convoking a meeting of the central committee. A report early in July 1957 listed the seven against Khrushchev as Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Pervukhin, Saburov, Bulganin, and Voroshilov, with only Mikoyan, Suslov, and Kirichenko supporting him.

With the recent elimination of Bulganin, whom Khrushchev described to Humphrey as stupid and incompetent, only Voroshilov and Pervukhin, of the seven opponents, still remain in the party presidium. Voroshilov, however, is approaching senility, and Pervukhin has already been demoted from full to candidate member of the presidium and sent to East Germany as the Soviet ambassador.

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Khrushchev Claims Rocket With 7,500-Nautical-Mile Range

In his talks with Senator Hubert Humphrey on 3 December, Premier Khrushchev stated that the USSR now has a rocket which can travel 7,500 nautical miles. He was probably referring to the Soviet ICBM with a reduced-weight payload which could achieve this distance.

The success the USSR has had in orbiting Sputniks I, II, and III indicates that it can launch a rocket to fly 7,500 nautical miles. The rockets would have payloads greater than the satellite weights in each case. The Sputnik II rocket vehicle is most likely of the Soviet ICBM configuration, although whether the configuration is 1.5-stage, two-stage, or a clustered arrangement cannot be determined on the basis of present evidence. A minimum rocket-propulsion system to orbit Sputnik II (1,100 pounds) could deliver a 1,500-2,000-pound nose cone to 7,500 nautical miles, and a maximum rocket-propulsion system could deliver a nose cone of about 7,000 pounds to 7,500 nautical miles.

A missile with a range of 7,000 nautical miles could reach any point in the US from any point in the USSR. (The maximum distance between extreme points in the US and USSR is about 7,000 nautical miles.) In the early stages of development, an ICBM would probably be designed for a specific maximum range and a specific warhead weight. In a later stage, a smaller warhead could be selected to achieve a longer range with the same vehicle. The USSR is believed to have reduced the warhead weight of the 700-nautical-mile missile to increase its range to 1,100 nautical miles.

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Khrushchev Discusses Soviet Nuclear Weapons With Senator Humphrey

Soviet Premier Khrushchev recently told Senator Humphrey that a Soviet hydrogen bomb yielding five megatons had used only a tenth as much fissionable material as had formerly been required. He also emphasized that the Soviet Union has so many weapons in stockpile that production of fissionable materials for weapon purposes could cease, and that some existing weapons would be dismantled.

While the Soviet Union has made substantial progress in improving thermonuclear weapons designs, it has not achieved an increase in efficiency of the order claimed by Khrushchev. It may be true that the Soviet Union is dismantling some of the older models of nuclear weapons, but these will undoubtedly be replaced by weapons of latest design. Such a program is normal to any weapons-development and stockpiling program. Khrushchev gave no date by which production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes would allegedly cease; present intelligence indicates plans for an expansion of such production at least through 1961.

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II. ASIA - AFRICA

Greece

The arrest on 5 December of Manolis Glezos, member of the executive committee of the Communist-front United Democratic Left (EDA) and director of the pro-Communist Athens newspaper Avgi, may presage an intensified anti-Communist campaign by the Greek Government. Glezos was arrested on the charge that he had been in contact with Constantine Koligiannis, a leader of the illegal Communist party of Greece (KKE). Further arrests and possible exile of top leaders of EDA and the closure of Avgi may take place within the next few days.

EDA has been harassed to some degree by the government since the elections of May 1958, in which it received 25 percent of the popular vote to become the second largest party in the Greek Chamber of Deputies. The arrest of top leaders such as Glezos, however, indicates that the campaign to discredit and neutralize EDA by demonstrating its close association with the KKE is being intensified.

The Karamanlis government simultaneously announced the arrest of several members of a clandestine Communist network in Greece.

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[Redacted] Failure to receive adequate support for the Greek case before the UN has apparently convinced Karamanlis that this is the time to divert public attention with a stepped-up anti-Communist campaign. First reports from Athens indicate, however, that the reason for the move is transparently clear to the public.

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III. THE WEST

Netherlands Government Increasingly Shaky

The Dutch Government may collapse on or about 11 December in the wake of a parliamentary debate on changes in the tax laws. Foreign Minister Luns, who has previously expressed concern over the government's prospects, told Ambassador Young on 5 December that he considered an early crisis a "serious possibility."

Prime Minister Drees' coalition of Labor, Catholic, Christian Historical, and Anti-Revolutionary parties, which was put together after months of negotiation following the 1956 elections, has come under increasing pressure during the past year. In the local elections last spring, Drees' Labor party lost its status as the largest Dutch party, and Labor leaders have recently seemed increasingly anxious to divorce the party from the government in preparation for the 1960 elections. There has also been some public criticism that multiparty governments are by nature inflexible because they cannot deviate readily from their agreed program.

If the Drees government falls, the crisis will probably be prolonged and may well lead to new elections prior to the expiration of the parliamentary term. Criticism--primarily from Labor--of the size of the Dutch contribution to NATO and the government's policies in the dispute with Indonesia over West New Guinea suggests that these issues will figure in the campaign if new elections are held.

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